magazines, Komsomol publications and a Latvian literary and art review.[26]

Individual Latvians and Estonians were serving the Soviet Union in different ways long before their respective countries were compelled to place at the disposal of the U.S.S.R. the whole of their economic assets, natural riches and manpower. Latvians and Estonians gave the Soviet régime not only industrious collective farmers and skilled workers, but also high ranking party and administrative officials, diplomats and G.P.U. agents. The influence exercised by the small Baltic minorities of the Soviet Union during the inter-war period becomes understandable if we bear in mind that they had the highest percentage of Communist Party members of all Soviet nationalities. Thus in 1927, 12,198 Latvians or 8·98 per cent of the entire Latvian minority were party members, while the 2,577 Lithuanian and the 3,682 Estonian communists accounted for 6·2 per cent and 2·38 per cent, respectively, of their national minorities in the U.S.S.R. The importance of these figures can be assessed more properly if we bear in mind that only 0·88 per cent of all Russians and 0·39 per cent of all Ukrainians were organized in the Communist Party at that time.[27]

The Latvian communists, who had played an outstanding part in the Civil War in the fighting for Petrograd, Moscow and Kazan, had earned the reputation of particular reliability. For a long time they enjoyed preferential treatment and were given many important key positions unattainable by other much more numerous nationalities of the Soviet Union. The most prominent Latvian in Soviet politics was Yan Ernestovich Rudzutak, member of the Politbureau of the All-Union Communist Party, Vice-Chairman of the Council of Peoples' Commissars from 1926 and in this capacity in supreme charge of Russian economic reconstruction. Rudzutak, who had survived several purges, was executed in 1937. Another influential Latvian was Robert Petrovich Eideman, President of the Osoaviakhim, the Soviet A.R.P. organization. He too was executed for treason together with Marshal Tukhachevsky. The nine judges passing the death sentence on Tukhachevsky, Eideman, etc., also included a Latvian, General Alksnis, organizer and commander of the Russian air force. Early in 1938 he was himself removed from office and jailed. The list of outstanding 'Soviet Latvians' of the period between the wars would be incomplete without the mentioning of Robert Indrikovich Eikhe. For over ten years he was the ruler of Western Siberia, at first as Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Siberian Territory (Sibkray), and after 1929 as First Secretary of the West Siberian party organization. In 1935 he became an alternate member of the Bolshevik Politbureau. He also did not survive the big purge.

The Baltic refugees in the Soviet Union not only occupied important